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WASHINGTON'S HEAD QUARTERS

AT VALLEY FORGE.

WASHINGTON

AT

VALLEY FORGE,

TOGETHER

WITH THE DUCHÉ CORRESPONDENCE.

"A day, an hour of virtuous liberty,
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage."

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WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

CHAPTER I.

"When freedom from her mountain height
Unfurl'd her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial white,
With streakings from the morning light!
Then, from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land!"

Joseph Rodman Drake.

In the history of a nation, how frequently we overlook the accomplishments of peace, for the glittering page that records their conquests and their military fame! The absorbing interest attached to scenes of strife and

carnage, chiefly engross the attention of the reader; they glide over the less exciting incidents of the story, and hasten on to those scenes, whose terrible realities far exceed the wildest illusions of romance. The historian, aware of this proclivity of the human mind, imparts interest to his page, by presenting in glowing language all that can allure or startle the reader. What varied emotions are excited by the thrilling narrative of the combat! From the first onset, to the final overthrow, every event is presented with terrible distinctness; and the blood-stained field, ghastly with its burden of death, is vividly pourtrayed, dimly revealed in the pale moonbeams, or illumed by the glare of burning villages, adding new horrors to the scene it discloses.

Although the brilliant achievements of the battle-field may dazzle by their evanescent splendor, and excite the most vivid emotions of the mind by presenting in fear-

ful reality all that the wildest imagination can conceive of what is dreadful and appalling; although the martial theme may glow with brightest lustre on the historic page, a nation's most enduring glory is not to be won in scenes like these. The courage that nerves the arm, and sustains the spirit in the battle's shock, is but a savage attribute; it exists in the bosom of the hireling soldier, and animates the savage beast of the forest in search of its prey. But the sublime heroism, the constancy and resignation that sustain the patriot in his country's cause, are far nobler attributes than those which animate the mere adventurer in the bloody game. When fate is adverse, and cruel fortune presses him to the earth, with what pure devotion and self-sacrifice he calmly awaits the propitious moment when Heaven shall reward his struggles and bid his sufferings cease! He fights not for the spoils of conquest, nor the oppression of a race, but

for a home, rich in all the blessings that flow from a free and enlightened country.

This was the spirit that animated and sustained the patriot army when it lay encamped at Valley Forge, in the memorable winter of 1777, '78. How many recollections, endearing to American hearts, are associated with that sacred spot! It was there, after a campaign of four months, harassed by tiresome marches and perpetual alarms, their life one continued scene of hardship and danger, they came with naked and bleeding feet amidst the driving snows of winter, and lay down in that dreary camp to become acquainted with hunger, cold, and watchfulness! There, in the midst of frost and snow, they erected Liberty's altar; and the history of the world has no parallel to the sublime heroism which, animated and sustained by the immortal Washington, upheld the cause of freedom through the gloomiest period of American history! How the heart thrills with admira-

tion at their devotion and courage, or is moved with pity at the recital of their sufferings! Unhappy men, far from home and the tender assiduities of friendship, their sufferings unmitigated and unrelieved by their almost despairing country, with no well known voices of home to soothe their sorrows, no wife, nor mother near, to relieve their wants or close their eyes in death; they sank into the grave almost unnoticed and unnumbered, with no friendly tear but those of sorrowing comrades shed for their sufferings or mingled with their dust. But their sufferings have consecrated the spot in every patriot heart, while history, tradition, and art shall transmit the tragic story to remotest posterity, as a sublime incentive to emulation when the imperilled liberties of their country shall summon them to arms.

After a few unimportant skirmishes and show of battle at Whitemarsh, the British general, seeing no probability of an engage-

ment, and the season being far advanced, resolved to retire into winter quarters at Philadelphia, after directing a general forage of the country on the western side of the Schuylkill. On the 30th of November, Washington called a general council of war, for the purpose of selecting the most eligible spot, and to decide on the best manner of cantoning the troops for the winter. So numerous were the selections, and so conflicting the statements of the advantages of each, that Washington, seeing a unanimous decision could not be hoped for, selected on his own responsibility Valley Forge, as the most eligible spot. Among other advantages it possessed, was the important one of being sufficiently near Philadelphia, to watch the enemy and prevent its foraging parties from ravaging the country. In general orders issued two days previous to the patriot army quitting Whitemarsh, Washington gave explicit directions for the erection of huts to shelter the

troops, canvas tents being considered utterly insufficient to shelter them from the severity of the weather; at the same time stating his determination to share with his soldiers every hardship and privation that awaited them. Nothing could have been more deplorable than the condition of the army when it began its march for Valley Forge; they were wholly unprovided even with the commonest necessaries for the arduous service before them; none were provided with sufficient clothing to protect them with any degree of comfort from the weather, while numbers had nothing but rags to cover them. So pitiable was their condition, "that they appeared more like mendicants than the defenders of a generous country,"* many were entirely without shoes, and their naked feet, lacerated by the hard and frozen earth, marked with bloody footprints every step of that sorrowful march.

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* Otis's Botta.

Valley Forge is situated in Chester County, about twenty miles from Philadelphia, on the western side of the Schuylkill; it is a deep and rugged hollow, scooped out, as it were, from the side of the mountain. It was on the mountainous flanks of this valley, and the plain overlooking it, that the army encamped. A little stream runs through the valley, turning in its course the wheel of a cotton factory that stands on its banks, near where it empties into the Schuylkill; the factory stands on the side of the old forge erected many years ago by Isaac Potts, who had extensive mining interests in the district, and from this circumstance the place derived its name of *Valley Forge.*

In the season of summer, when nature shines in full beauty and splendor, when the groves are melodious with the songs of birds, and pure and gentle gales blow from the mountains, when every hill-top and vale presents a scene on which the eye loves to

linger, the visitor to Valley Forge will find it a scene of exquisite rural beauty; the little stream that ripples through the valley murmuring a gentle invitation to enter upon the sacred spot. But when the patriot army approached, it presented a far different aspect; the white drapery of winter lay on the dead earth like a shroud, emblematic of their almost expiring hopes of home and country; the little brook was silent in its icy covering, and the blasts of winter howled their fierce welcome through the defiles of the mountains; the whole aspect of nature affording a sad intimation of the many trials that awaited them.

So slow was the march of the army that it required from the 11th to the 19th of December to reach Valley Forge. On the 18th the entire army engaged in religious services, Congress having recommended it as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer. On the morning of the 19th the army reached

Valley Forge, and immediately began the necessary work of erecting huts for shelter. They worked with great alacrity, and hill-side and plain were soon alive with activity and bustle. Excepting those who were too poorly clad to admit of exposure, all worked with zeal; the strongest cut down the trees, others fashioned them into shape and conveyed them to the spot where they were to be used; and soon the rude huts began to rise above the hitherto deserted plain. Washington, to stimulate exertion and reward the active and skillful, promised the reward of twelve dollars to the party in each regiment who finished their hut in the most expeditious and workmanlike manner; an additional reward of one hundred dollars was offered to the officer or soldier who could devise a suitable form of covering for the huts cheaper and more easily obtained than boards. In a few days the barracks were completed, and having been built with some

degree of regularity in streets and squares, presented somewhat the appearance of a city. Washington now removed to the dwelling of Isaac Potts, and made it his head-quarters, having occupied his marquee, comfortless and exposed as it was, during the building of the huts, according to his resolve to share with his soldiers every vicissitude that hard fortune imposed upon them.

On the spot where Washington planted his marquee on the day of his arrival there now stands an observatory erected by Mr. Charles H. Rogers, who owns the cotton factory and much of the landed property in the vicinity. It is a handsome structure, octagon in shape, and about forty feet in height, with a spiral stair-case leading to an open gallery on the top. Standing on the brow of a hill, it affords an extensive view of the surrounding country and the camping ground of the army.

We are indebted to Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," for the following account of the encampment and the disposition of the troops:

"Near Washington's head-quarters, on a gentle elevation by the river, were stationed his body or life-guard, under the command of Charles Gibb, of Rhode Island. A little to the right of the guard was the brigade of General M'Intosh; and further up the hill were the brigades of Huntington, Conway, and Maxwell. Between these and M'Intosh's brigade were a redoubt and slight intrenchment, and directly in front of them was a line of *abatis*. Nearer the Schuylkill, and on the top of the hill, was the brigade of General Varnum, near a star redoubt. At a distance of about a mile, and forming a line from the Schuylkill to Valley Creek, was the main portion of the army, under Brigadiers Muhlenberg, Weedon, Paterson, Learned, Glover, Poor, Wayne, Scott, and Woodford,

with a line of intrenchments in front. The artificers of the army were on the north side of the creek, opposite the General's quarters; and near the cotton factory was the army bake-house. There was also an irregular line of intrenchments along the brow of the hill, on the south side of the creek. Not far southward of Rogers' observatory was a redoubt, and near it was Knox's artillery. The remains of this redoubt are yet very prominent in the woods, on the right side of the road leading from Valley Forge to Paoli; also the redoubt on the left wing of the encampment (now near the Reading Railroad) is well preserved, the forest protecting it from demolition."

Thus ended this severe and arduous campaign. The only advantage derived by the British General from his various successes, was the important one of having secured most excellent winter quarters for his troops; and this advantage was enjoyed to the

utmost. With them, the period of inactivity was enlivened by scenes of gaiety and splendor; and the few hours devoted to military duty were followed by the convivial scene, where plenty abounded, and luxury wooed them to indulgence. But how different was it with the patriot army!—there, amid the snow-covered hills of Valley Forge, where freedom's flame but feebly glimmered on the altar, the sons of freedom were contending with hunger and cold, and every form of wretchedness that can crush the spirit or subdue the heart; while their ranks were daily thinned by diseases insidious and deadly, and more fatal than the sword.

The house occupied by Washington as his head-quarters, is a substantial stone edifice, standing near the mouth of the creek; his own room was very small, with a deep window looking eastward, and commanding a view of the neighboring slopes, and a large portion of the ground where the army was

encamped. The visitor is yet shown, in the broad sill of the window, the little trap-door, and the cavity beneath it, which Washington had arranged as a secret depository for his papers. The associations connected with this sacred spot are of the most interesting character. In this humble apartment Washington toiled unceasingly to alleviate the sufferings of his army, and to retrieve the adverse fortunes of his country. As we stand before the little casement, and gaze upon the extended prospect, radiant with the bloom of spring, the mind reverts to those days of trial when Washington stood here, gazing with anguish and sorrow upon the snow-covered hills, where his suffering army lay withering in the grasp of winter and destitution! How frequently has this little window shone with the light of his midnight labor, gleaming through the darkness like the star of hope in the midst of gloom and despair, cheering the weary sentinel in his

bleak night watch, as the guiding star of heaven cheers the lone mariner on the trackless seas! How frequently has this hallowed room witnessed his communion with the throne of grace, when oppressed by the trials inseparable to his exalted position! One of the most prominent traits in Washington's character was his steady reliance on Divine assistance; and with a firm conviction of the justice of his cause, he moved on, calm and serene, amid the distrust of friends and the imputations of his enemies, with bright hopes and brilliant plans for the future.

The following affecting incident is related of Washington in Lossing's beautiful "Field Book of the Revolution;" it is one of the most interesting incidents among the events of that sad period:

"Isaac Potts, at whose house Washington was quartered, relates that one day, while the Americans were encamped at Valley Forge, he strolled up the creek, when, not

far from his dam he heard a solemn voice. He walked quietly in the direction of it, and saw Washington's horse tied to a sapling. In a thicket near by was the beloved chief upon his knees in prayer, his cheeks suffused with tears. Like Moses at the bush, Isaac felt that he was upon holy ground, and withdrew unobserved. He was much agitated, and on entering the room where his wife was, he burst into tears. On her inquiring the cause, he informed her of what he had seen, and added: 'If there is any one on this earth whom the Lord will listen to, it is George Washington; and I feel a presentiment that under such a commander there can be no doubt of our eventually establishing our independence, and that God in his providence has willed it so.'"

"Oh! who shall know the might
Of the words he uttered there?
The fate of nations there was turn'd
By the fervor of his prayer."—J. L. CHESTER.

CHAPTER II.

Thy spirit, independence, let me share!
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye;
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.
Smollett.

The impoverished condition of the army at Valley Forge must be ascribed to a number of causes. Congress, being inexperienced in the management of affairs, and particularly those of a military nature, had advised, as if in an enemy's country, the seizure of everything that could serve to supply the wants of the army. This measure, though promptly acted upon, and pursued with incredible exertion, only procured a meagre supply for a few days. So unpopular was this movement, that an adverse disposition soon began to be manifested by the inhabi-

tants of the surrounding country. They drove their cattle into the woods and swamps, and hid away in secluded and secret places everything that was likely to be seized upon for the use of the army. Many preferred encountering every risk in conveying their property to Philadelphia, where they were paid for it in hard cash by the British, rather than dispose of it to the patriot army in exchange for the doubtful paper currency issued by Congress. So greatly had these bills depreciated, that many regarded them as utterly worthless. The still doubtful issue of the contest, and the instability of the government, rendered it very improbable that the vast quantity of paper money issued by Congress would ever be redeemed. Many untoward circumstances, impossible to be controlled, contributed to this state of affairs. The country around was deeply tainted with toryism; and the coercive measures advised by Congress had alienated

many who were previously well inclined to the cause. The peculations and deliquencies of avaricious contractors, and the want of efficient commissaries, greatly increased the general distress, and contributed to those disasters that for a time threatened the army with dissolution.

Scarcely were the troops settled in their encampment at Valley Forge, when Washington, apprised of an intended expedition by Howe to forage the islands of the Delaware and the country around Darby, resolved to detach a large force for the purpose of intercepting it. An inspection of the magazines to provision this force, revealed the appalling fact that scarcely a single day's supply remained in the camp. This fearful condition of affairs not only compelled the relinquishment of all offensive operations, but revealed the necessity of immediate and active exertion in procuring supplies, if the army was to be saved from famine and

dissolution. The absolute powers conferred upon Washington by Congress not only impowered him to levy upon the surrounding country, and seize upon everything that could be used to subsist the army, but that body had commanded that this measure should be resorted to; and the fatal necessity that existed urged its immediate and effective consummation. Foraging parties were sent out and swept the country around, but the greatest exertions could only procure a sufficiency for a few days. This meagre supply was soon exhausted, and all subsequent exertions were but gleaning the field. Notwithstanding the pressing necessity that existed, Washington was greatly disinclined to this method of subsisting the army. The supplies were meagre and unsatisfactory, and could only be procured by incredible exertions. It alienated the population whose goods were seized, and greatly strengthened the disaffected in their opposition to the

government, and added to their numbers. It accustomed his soldiers to disregard the private rights of the people; it inclined them to lay hands upon the property of others, and to seize upon whatever might be used for public service or contribute to personal gratification; it promoted lawlessness, and engendered a spirit of license and insubordination that greatly endangered the safety of the camp.

Washington, being fully aware of the impossibility of subsisting an army any length of time by compulsory requisitions, had written to the various Governors of New England, urging them, in the most pressing language, to forward, with the greatest despatch, provisions for the army, particularly cattle which abounded in those provinces. The Commissaries had repaired thither by the direction of Congress, and made contracts for an immense supply of provisions. But here a new difficulty presented itself, and one

which threatened to frustrate the good effects of these important measures. The reverses sustained by the American arms, and the gloomy aspect of affairs in Pennsylvania, had caused the enormous issue of paper money, which Congress was continually making, to depreciate to one-fourth its nominal value, so that one hundred dollars in paper would command but twenty-five in specie, while articles of necessity had advanced nearly in the same ratio; so that in order to complete their contracts, the Commissaries had been obliged to conform to the current rates. But Congress disapproved of their action, and, unwisely attributing to cupidity what was really the effect of public distress, either refused to ratify their contracts, or postponed the execution of them. In addition to this, they passed a law, requiring the several States to establish by express laws the price of labor, and also to fix the price of all articles in common use among the people.

The bad effects of these laws were soon apparent; the citizens secreted their effects; the regular marts of trade were deserted; and buyers could find nothing they wanted either in the markets or elsewhere.

While these operations were pending, and the much desired relief delayed by the tardy action of Congress, the American camp presented a terrible picture of distress; gaunt famine prevailed; the soldiers were enfeebled by hunger and exposure; and the want of everything necessary to preserve them in health, had propagated disease, which spread rapidly among them. Overcome by a miserable lassitude, the strong as well as the weak sank before it; the hospitals were crowded with miserable wretches who looked forward to no other relief but that of death.

One of the severest necessities felt by them was the want of straw; there was none in the camp, nor was there anything that could be used to raise them from the

ground while they slept; the severe and arduous service of the day found no refreshing repose at night—no other couch than the bare and frozen earth. This proved a most prolific source of disease, and more perished than by the sword. The hospital buildings were unsuitable in every respect, and overcrowded, with none of the resources necessary to support and restore the sick. They were miserably destitute of furniture, and illy prepared in every respect for hospital purposes. The amount of distress presented by these dreadful receptacles baffles description, and humanity must shudder at what it failed to alleviate. Confined to a scanty and unwholesome diet—for the coarsest provisions could scarcely be procured—with no changes of linen, so indispensable to the comforts of the sick, and no medicine but what was made worse than useless by the pernicious adulteration of avaricious contractors, they proved rather re-

ceptacles for the dying than a refuge for the sick; and where the voice of kindness and sympathy alone should have been heard, the dreary walls echoed only the wail of lamentation and despair. The soldiers regarded these pestilential abodes with horror, and many refused to enter them, preferring the risk of perishing in the open air rather than do so. Their defective organization, and the absence of all sanitary regulations, had engendered the hospital fever, and hundreds of valuable lives were sacrificed that might, with proper assistance, have been saved for the service of their country.

In February, out of nearly seventeen thousand men that had entered the camp the previous December, scarcely five thousand were fit for duty; the barracks were crowded with men unfitted for service for want of sufficient clothing to cover them; and large numbers had found refuge in the neighboring farmhouses, unable to take the field from the

same cause. It cannot be overlooked, that if General Howe had seized the opportunity and made a sudden attack on the camp, it would, in all probability, have proved victorious; for it would have been apparently impossible, with a starving and disabled army, for the American General to have successfully defended his intrenchments; and had he been compelled to take the field in the midst of so severe a winter, with a force unequipped even for a summer campaign, it must have resulted in the dispersion or entire destruction of his army. Howe's apathy in neglecting so favorable an opportunity is unaccountable, and must be ascribed either to timidity or excessive prudence.

The pernicious effects of the many evils that pressed so severely upon the American camp, began to be fearfully prominent. Although the brilliant example and patient endurance of many of the officers, had sup-

pressed everything like a mutinous disposition on the part of the troops, it cannot be denied that all system had greatly relaxed, discipline had declined, and restraint of any kind was but slightly acknowledged; horses were permitted to wander into the fields and to be lost for want of search, or perish miserably in the highways from neglect and exposure; carts and other vehicles belonging to the army were permitted to encumber the roads useless and disregarded, which would have been of incalculable service if properly employed; while hundreds of men were constrained to perform, as they really did with incredible patience and exertion, the duty of beasts of burden, in dragging firewood, and assisting in the transportation of stores for the camp. In this manner many of the evils resulting from the defective organization of the camp were remedied to a considerable extent; but how can we sufficiently appreciate the patriotism of these self-sacrificing

men, who maintained with unshaken fortitude, in the midst of frost and famine, their pledge of fidelity to their country; and firmly endured every vicissitude that attends destitution and misery, rather than succumb with dishonor, and disappoint the hopes of their country in the hour of gloom and despair? Washington was untiring in his efforts to ameliorate the sufferings of his army, and to the love and veneration with which the soldiers regarded their beloved Commander, must be attributed the continued existence of the army through that perilous period. His importunities at length awakened Congress to the imperative necessity that existed for retracing their steps, which they did by advising the several States to repeal their laws on the subject of prices; they withdrew their restrictions on the purchasing commissaries, and permitted their contracts to take effect. The great want of wheeled carriages, however, greatly delayed the arrival

of the supplies, and so much time was lost in procuring these conveyances, that much of it was wasted or destroyed before the convoys reached the camp. In the meantime, to save the army from dissolution, Washington ordered a general forage of the surrounding country to procure supplies. General Greene swept the country in the neighborhood of the camp; Captains Lee and M'Lane, both active and zealous officers, were despatched to the States of Maryland and Delaware, and Colonel Tilghman to New Jersey. These commissions were carried out with great zeal and activity; they penetrated into the most secret places, and found vast quantities of supplies hidden away; in the marshy islands of the Delaware particularly, they found hidden large droves of cattle intended for the Philadelphia market, but which they soon compelled to take another direction towards the camp. These supplies were timely and abundant, and went

far towards relieving the pressing necessities of the camp.

Amid the numerous calamities that pressed with such severity upon the camp, there was none which caused so much anxiety to Washington as the pernicious example afforded by some of the officers, who had openly declared their intentions of quitting the service. Owing to the great depreciation of the paper money issued by Congress and the immense advance on articles of consumption, in consequence also of the season and the existing commercial difficulties, many officers had found it impossible to live upon their pay; those who were destitute of private resources were compelled to live in the most parsimonious manner, or to contract debts which they could not liquidate; and many who possessed private fortunes had greatly embarrassed themselves by endeavouring to maintain an appearance suitable to their rank in the army. A large

number had already resigned their commissions and returned to their families. These resignations, unfortunately, were not confined to officers of the lowest grade, but included some of the bravest and the worthiest in the army. Their quitting the service at this period cannot be considered wholly a dereliction of duty; they considered the pitiable condition to which they were reduced as degrading; and although willing to accord all that patriotism could demand or honour require in the service of their country, they could not endure a condition incompatible with their sense of personal honour and self-respect, and hence their disinclination to the service. Washington was greatly alarmed at the spread of this spirit of disaffection, and was untiring in his efforts to stay its progress. He spared neither promises nor encouragement in his efforts to do so; he earnestly importuned Congress to take speedy and effective action in the matter; he particularly

directed their attention to the necessity of securing to the officers half pay for life, or for a definite term of years dating from the expiration of the war; he urged, in the most forcible language, the necessity of thorough measures; he told them it was in vain to rely solely upon the efforts of patriotism and individual sacrifices to maintain a protracted war; and that it would be impossible to bring the struggle to a successful issue without the incentive of interest or hope of reward. Although the struggle had furnished the most brilliant examples of patriotism and self-sacrifices, and many continued to act from the same noble impulses, yet they were wholly inadequate for the support of the war; that it was too much to hope for, that large bodies of men could be held together without the generous support of the government; and as it was impossible to entirely control the actions of men, it would be better to secure a support so indispensable to

the States by appealing to their interest, or offering any inducements that would content them. These propositions were not acted upon as promptly as was desired by Washington; they were coldly received by Congress; they considered them as extraordinary, and manifested at first very little inclination to grant them; they considered the grants of lands already made to officers and soldiers as sufficient to gratify the wishes of moderate men. They were soon awakened from this state of indifference by the necessity that existed for the most effective operations; they decreed an allowance of half pay for life to the officers of the army, with the reserved power to commute it to the sum of six years' half pay if considered expedient. Subsequently they passed another resolution, restricting the allowance of half pay to seven years, dating from the end of the war. These measures, unfortunately, were taken too late to have as salutary an effect as was

hoped for; a large number of officers had already resigned their commissions and returned to their families. This serious defection might have been prevented, to a great extent, by a more liberal and spontaneous effort on the part of the government.

Notwithstanding the unremitting exertions of Washington to prepare the army for the ensuing campaign, the advancing season found them but scantily prepared, and the spring had entirely passed before the organization of the army was completed. By a decree of the 27th of May, the infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers, were organized upon a uniform system throughout the army; up to this time great confusion had prevailed in the service, owing to the great disparity existing not only between the regiments of different States, but those belonging to the same State. In addition to the complete organization of the army, it had been rendered far more effective in its disci-

pline than it had ever before been, by the services of the Baron Steuben, a veteran commander and disciplinarian from the army of Frederick the Great; he joined the American camp at Valley Forge, in May, 1778, as a volunteer, and was almost immediately appointed Inspector General with the rank and pay of Major General; the appointment was accompanied with the most flattering resolutions from Congress; his services were of incalculable benefit to the army, and the effects of his rigid discipline were seen in the skillful manœuvring, and in the firmness and decision of the troops in the ensuing campaign. He was a brave man, devoted to liberty, and a warm-hearted, generous friend of America.

During the occupancy of Philadelphia by the British, they evinced but little activity, and their stay was unmarked by any important event; they contented themselves with foraging the country around Philadelphia,

and by frequent excursions into the nearer parts of New Jersey, to procure supplies and secure the roads. These enterprises were of the most ordinary character, with one or two exceptions,—in one instance, in the month of March, a party of Americans were surprised at Hancock House, near the Bridges of Quinton and Hancock, and were ruthlessly massacred while appealing for quarter; they were completely surprised whilst sleeping in their beds, and though no resistance was made, not a man escaped in this unmitigated murder. They also attempted to surprise the encampment at Barren Hill on the left side of the Schuylkill, under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette, but were completely foiled by his activity and courage.

While these events were passing on land, the naval contests of the Americans were marked by the most brilliant success. British commerce suffered incredible losses by

the daring and enterprise of American cruisers, they conquered hundreds of vessels, and swept many a rich prize from off the coast of England itself. These maritime conquests were brilliant and decided, and afforded a cheering contrast to the gloom and depression of the land operations.

In the meanwhile, Sir William Howe, becoming dissatisfied with the course of his government at home, had offered his resignation, which was promptly accepted, and Sir Henry Clinton appointed his successor. In his instructions was ordered the immediate evacuation of Philadelphia. He took command of the army on the 11th of May, and immediately began his preparations for departure; in the meanwhile, Washington, informed of his evident intention to abandon the city, placed his army in a condition to resume hostilities at once.

On the morning of the 18th of June, a little before day-break, the British left the

city and commenced crossing the Delaware at Gloucester point; before noon the entire army had crossed; and toward evening the whole force was encamped around Haddonfield, on the south side of Cooper's creek, about five miles south-east of Camden.

Washington was not informed of the evacuation of the city until the British had actually crossed the Delaware; being satisfied of Clinton's intention to push forward towards New York, he immediately broke up his camp, and pushed forward with nearly his entire force towards the Delaware for the purpose of intercepting him. General Arnold, who was unfitted for active service by a severe wound, took possession of Philadelphia with a small detachment. In the brilliant campaign that followed, the rapid marches, the spirited manœuvring, and well contested field of Monmouth, gave unequivocal proof, how little the patriot army were broken in spirit, or diminished in courage,

by the dreadful sufferings of that fearful winter at Valley Forge.

It would be tedious, in a sketch like this, to advert to the many intrigues and cabals that distressed Washington, and embarrassed the government at this period; many individuals prominent in military and civil life, were implicated in these agitations; those who are acquainted with the history of the Revolution, must be familiar with the circumstances, and their results upon the past and present history of the country. There were several attempts to subvert the government, and to supplant Washington in the command of the army. Although fully apprised of the artifices employed to diminish his well earned reputation, his exalted mind exhibited that constancy and moderation, that evinced his entire subjugation of self to the great work before him; he indulged in no secret discontent against his country; his zeal for duty experienced no remission; his enemies were

unnoticed and rendered powerless by his silence, and in his devotion to his country he seems to have forgotten himself.

One of the most insidious of these treasonable efforts, was the extraordinary letters written by Jacob Duché to General Washington, imploring him to abandon the American cause, and to assist in the subversion of the attempt to establish the independence of the country. Duché was the friend of Washington, and had officiated as chaplain in the first Continental Congress; he was then rector of Christ Church in Philadelphia, and was a resident of the city during its occupancy by the British. This event, though but lightly touched upon by the historian, and but casually mentioned in revolutionary writings, was perhaps the most critical for the country and its hopes of any similar attempt during the struggle; this document was as fatal to the peace and reputation of of its author, as its rejection by Washington

is the grandest monument to that undeviating honour and integrity, that shone with such constant splendour throughout his illustrious career.

THE REV. JACOB DUCHÉ.

RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH & ST PETERS, PHILAD^{A}

CHAPTER III.

The subject of this memoir, Jacob Duché, was born in Philadelphia, about the year 1738. His family was of Huguenot origin, and came over to this country among the early settlers who accompanied or followed William Penn, though at what precise date we have been unable to ascertain.

He graduated in 1757, at the Pennsylvania University, in Philadelphia, and pursued his theological studies in the same city; after which he went to England for the purpose of being ordained to the ministry of the Episcopal Church. On his return to Philadelphia, he continued to officiate for many years as assistant minister and rector.

The early period of his life is marked by no particular incidents. He was gifted with

a peculiar style of pulpit eloquence, which was pronounced to be very effective, and which procured for him a considerable degree of popularity amongst the parishioners of the churches in which he officiated. In 1771, he published his "*Letters of Tamoc Caspipina*," a kind of half political and half religious work, having reference to his connection with Christ Church and the English politics of the times. The name was composed of the initial letters of the words—"*The Assistant Minister of Christ Church and St. Peter's, in Philadelphia, in North America.*"

It is probable that the name of JACOB DUCHÉ would have long been forgotten with those of many far greater men, but for its connection with the important events that were then transpiring.

On the 5th of September, 1774, there assembled in Philadelphia, in Carpenter's Hall, the first Continental Congress; this august body was composed of such men as

George Washington, Patrick Henry, Peyton Randolph, and a brilliant galaxy of others, numbering in all fifty-one delegates, and representing all the Colonies excepting Georgia. The first two days were spent in organizing and arranging preliminaries, when it was proposed by Mr. Cushing, of Massachusetts, that their sessions should be opened with prayer. After some discussion, arising from the fact that the delegates were of different religious denominations, it was suggested by Samuel Adams, "that Mr. Duché, an English Episcopal Clergyman, might be desired to read prayers before the Congress to-morrow morning." This motion had the effect of producing unanimity of feeling, Mr. Adams being himself a strong Congregationalist. In the course of the day a rumor reached Philadelphia, that Boston had been cannonaded by the British. It produced a strong sensation; and when Congress met on the following morning, (the 7th,) the effect of the in-

telligence was visible in every countenance. Mr. Duché appeared in his canonicals, and attended by his clerk, he read with great solemnity several prayers in the established form, the clerk making the responses. After which he read the Psalms for the seventh morning of the month, among which was the Thirty-fifth Psalm, commencing thus:

"Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me; fight against them that fight against me.

"Lay hand upon the shield and buckler, and stand up to help me.

"Bring forth the spear and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," &c.

The singular appropriateness of this appeared to strike all present. John Adams, in a letter to his wife on the day following, thus describes the scene:

"I never saw a greater effect upon an audience. It seemed as if Heaven had ordained that Psalm to be read on that morning. After this Mr. Duché, unexpect-

edly to every body, struck out into an extemporary prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. I must confess I never heard a better prayer, or one so well pronounced." For the benefit of our readers, who may not have seen it, we will give this prayer in full:

"O Lord our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth, and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all kingdoms, empires, and governments; look down in mercy, we beseech thee, on these American States, who have fled to thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves on thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only on thee; to thee they have appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which thou alone canst give; take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under thy nurturing care; give them wisdom in council, and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries; convince *them* of the unrighteousness of their cause; and if they still persist in their sanguinary purposes, Oh! let the voice of thine own unerring justice sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands

in the day of battle. Be thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly; enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may be speedily closed, that order, harmony, and peace may be effectually restored; and truth and justice, religion and piety, prevail and flourish amongst thy people. Preserve the health of their bodies and the vigor of their minds; shower down on *them* and the *millions* they here represent, such temporal blessings as thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Saviour. Amen!"

The solemnity of the occasion, and the eloquent manner in which this prayer was delivered, seemed to affect every one present, particularly Washington, who, it is remarked, while others stood, went through the ceremony in a kneeling posture.

By a vote of Congress, Duché was thanked for the eloquent prayer he delivered on this occasion.

At this time, he was assistant rector of two churches, Christ Church and St. Peter's;

and in the year following, at the death of Dr. Richard Peters, the rector of these churches, Mr. Duché was appointed to the rectorship.

In July, 1776, Mr. Duché was appointed chaplain to Congress, with a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars.

He held his situation as chaplain about three months, and then resigned; his salary he bestowed upon the families of those slain in battle. Whether his principles had undergone a change at this time we cannot say; he had never evinced much force of character in his opposition to the British government, and his participation in the Revolutionary movement can be considered nothing more than a tacit acquiescence in the events transpiring around him; he must, however, have continued obnoxious to the tories, for it appears that a day previous to Howe's entry into Philadelphia, he was seized by a party of them and thrown into prison.

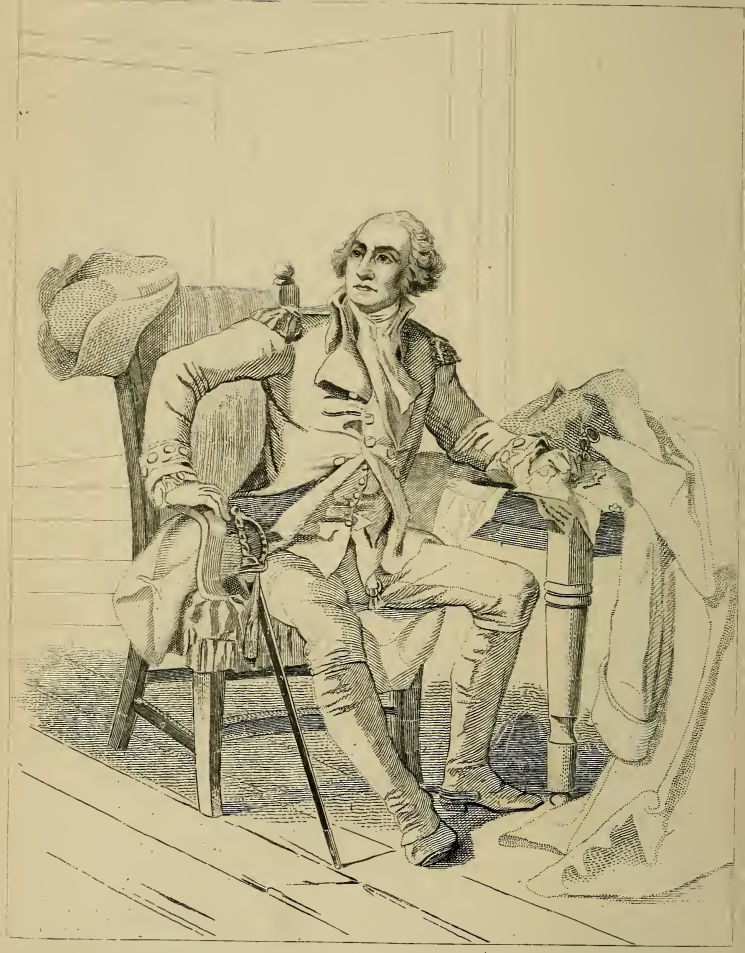
When the British were in possession of Philadelphia, Duché was much in the company of the officers, whose congenial society and polite manners seem to have operated upon his pliant disposition, and to sway a mind not sufficiently strong to resist the influences at work around him. If we can believe his own assertions, he had never entered ardently into the American cause, and when appointed chaplain to Congress, he received the appointment with regret, and performed its duties with reluctance. His early resignation of the office, and the bestowal of his salary on the families of those slain in battle, seem rather to have arisen from a desire to avoid all complicity in the cause, than from any benevolent motive. His English education, and the allegiance to his sovereign inculcated by the religion he professed, no doubt contributed to weaken the adverse position he had at first assumed toward the mother country.

Though possessed of an elegant and refined mind, it was unfortunately connected with a weak and facile disposition, and entirely wanting in those strong qualities necessary to confront the storm of war that was lowering over his country.

In his letter, he distinctly disclaims all coercion on the part of the British, and assumes the entire responsibility of the act, so that whatever of infamy or disgrace may be attached to it, must properly belong to himself. Had his intervention been purely the dictates of a Christian heart, anxious to save the effusion of blood and restore peace to a distracted country, he would have retained his honour, and posterity would have vindicated his character though it may have condemned the act; but when he descended from this high position, to vilify the noble men who had pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honours in the contest, and to deride the efforts of those who

had forsaken home and family to endure the vicissitudes of war, he assumed a position in American history in which he has but one associate, and from which the charitable historian will never desire to withdraw the veil, concealing the only blot that dims the lustre of our Revolutionary fame.

The bearer of this letter to General Washington was an American lady, the daughter of Doctor Thomas Graeme of Pennsylvania, then the wife of Hugh Ferguson. She was a woman of superior character and attainments, and, although the wife of an enemy to the country, had the confidence and respect of leading patriots. It is supposed she was not acquainted with the contents of the letter, and that her motive was entirely pure. When the letter began to be circulated, she was at first suspected as a British emissary; she lived, however, to see all these suspicions dissipated.



WASHINGTON AND THE DUCHÉ LETTER.

VALLEY FORGE 1777.

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FROM THE REVEREND JACOB DUCHÉ.

[Philadelphia], 8 October, 1777.*

Sir,

If this letter should find you in Council, or in the field, before you read another sentence, I beg you to take the first opportunity of retiring, and weighing its important contents. You are perfectly acquainted with the part I formerly took in the present unhappy contest. I was, indeed, among the first to bear my public testimony against having any recourse to threats, or indulging a thought of an armed opposition.

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* This extraordinary letter was immediately transmitted by Washington to Congress. In a letter to the President of Congress, dated October 16th, which accompanied it, he wrote as follows:

"I yesterday, through the hands of Mrs. Ferguson, of Graham Park, received a letter, of a very curious and extraordinary nature, from Mr. Jacob Duché, which I have thought proper to transmit to Congress. To this ridiculous, illiberal performance, I made a short reply, by desiring the bearer of it, if she should hereafter, by any accident, meet Mr. Duché, to tell him I should have returned it unopened, if I had had any idea of the contents; observing, at the same time, that I highly disapproved the intercourse she seemed to have been carrying on, and expected it would be discontinued. Notwithstanding the author's assertion, I cannot but suspect that the measure did not originate with him, and that he was induced to it by the hope of establishing his interest and peace more effectually with the enemy."

The current, however, was too strong for my feeble efforts to resist. I wished to follow my countrymen as far only as virtue, and the righteousness of their cause, would permit me. I was, however, prevailed on, among the rest of my clerical brethren of this city, to gratify the pressing desires of my fellow-citizens, by preaching a sermon to the second city battalion. I was pressed to publish this sermon, and reluctantly consented. From a personal attachment, of nearly twenty years' standing, and a high respect for your character, in private as well as public life, I took the liberty of dedicating this sermon to you. I had your affectionate thanks for my performance, in a letter, wherein was expressed, in the most delicate and obliging terms, your regard for me, and your wishes for a continuance of my friendship and approbation of your conduct. Further than this I intended not to proceed. My sermon speaks for itself, and wholly disclaims the idea of independency. My sentiments were well known to my friends. I communicated them, without reserve, to many respectable members of Congress, who expressed their warm approbation of it then. I persisted, to the very last moment, to use the prayers for my Sovereign, though threatened with insults from the violence of a party.

Upon the declaration of independency, I called my vestry, and solemnly put the question to them, whether they thought it best, for the peace and welfare of the congregation, to shut up the churches, or to continue the service, without using the prayers for the Royal

Family. This was the sad alternative. I concluded to abide by their decision, as I could not have time to consult my spiritual superiors in England. They determined it most expedient, under such critical circumstances, to keep open the churches, that the congregations might not be dispersed, which we had great reason to apprehend.

A very few days after the fatal declaration of independency, I received a letter from Mr. Hancock, sent by express to Germantown, where my family were for the summer season, acquainting me I was appointed Chaplain to the Congress, and desired my attendance next morning, at nine o'clock. Surprised and distressed, as I was, by an event I was not prepared to expect; obliged to give an immediate attendance, without the opportunity of consulting my friends, I easily accepted the appointment. I could have but one motive for taking this step. I thought the churches in danger, and hoped, by this means, to have been instrumental in preventing those ills I had so much reason to apprehend. I can, however, with truth, declare, I then looked upon independency rather as an expedient, and hazardous, or, indeed, thrown out *in terrorem*, in order to procure some favorable terms, than a measure that was seriously persisted in, at all events. My sudden change of conduct will clearly evince this to have been my idea of the matter.

Upon the return of the Committee of Congress, appointed to confer with Lord Howe, I soon discerned their whole intentions. The different accounts which

each member gave of this conference, the time they took to make up the matter for public view, and the amazing disagreements between the newspaper accounts, and the relation I myself had from the mouth of one of the Committee, convinced me there must have been some unfair and ungenerous procedure. This determination to treat on no other strain than that of independency, which put it out of his Lordship's power to mention any terms at all, was sufficient proof to me that independency was the idol they had long wished to set up, and that, rather than sacrifice this, they would deluge their country with blood. From this moment I determined upon my resignation, and, in the beginning of October, 1776, sent it, in form, to Mr. Hancock, after having officiated only two months and three weeks; and from that time, as far as my safety would permit, I have been opposed to all their measures.

This circumstantial account of my conduct, I think due to the friendship you were so obliging as to express for me, and, I hope, will be sufficient to justify my seeming inconsistencies in the part I have acted.

And now, dear Sir, suffer me, in the language of truth and real affection, to address myself to you. All the world must be convinced you are engaged in the service of your country from motives perfectly disinterested. You risked every thing that was dear to you, abandoned the sweets of domestic life, which your affluent fortune can give the uninterrupted enjoyment of. But had you, could you have had, the least idea

of matters being carried to such a dangerous extremity? Your most intimate friends shuddered at the thought of a separation from the mother country, and I took it for granted that your sentiments coincided with theirs. What, then, can be the consequence of this rash and violent measure, and degeneracy of representation, confusion of councils, blunders without number? The most respectable characters have withdrawn themselves, and are succeeded by a great majority of illiberal and violent men. Take an impartial view of the present Congress, and what can you expect from them? Your feelings must be greatly hurt by the representation of your native Province. You have no longer a Randolph, a Bland, or a Braxton, men, whose names will ever be revered, whose demands never ran above the first ground on which they set out, and whose truly glorious and virtuous sentiments I have frequently heard with rapture from their own lips. Oh! my dear Sir, what a sad contrast of characters now presents; others, whose friends can ne'er mingle with your own. Your Harrison alone remains, and he disgusted with the unworthy associates.

As to those of my own Province, some of them are so obscure, that their very names were never in my ears before, and others have only been distinguished for the weakness of their understandings, and the violence of their tempers. One alone I except from the general charge; a man of virtue, dragged reluctantly into their measures, and restrained, by some false ideas

of honor, from retreating, after having gone too far. You cannot be at a loss to discover whose name answers to this character.

From the New England provinces can you find one that, as a gentleman, you could wish to associate with, unless the soft and mild address of Mr. Hancock can atone for his want of every other qualification necessary for the seat which he fills? Bankrupts, attorneys, and men of desperate fortunes are his colleagues. Maryland no longer sends a Tilghman and a Protestant Carroll. Carolina has lost her Lynch; and the elder Middleton has retired. Are the dregs of Congress, then, still to influence a mind like yours? These are not the men you engaged to serve; these are not the men that America has chosen to represent her. Most of them were chosen by a little, low faction, and the few gentlemen that are among them now are well known to lie on the balance, and looking up to your hand alone to turn the beam. 'Tis you, Sir, and you only, that support the present Congress; of this you must be fully sensible. Long before they left Philadelphia, their dignity and consequence were gone; what must it be now, since their precipitate retreat? I write with freedom, but without invective; I know these things to be true, and I write to one whose own observation must have convinced him that it is so.

After this view of the Congress, turn to the army. The whole world knows that its only existence depends upon you; that your death or captivity dis-

perses it in a moment, and that there is not a man on that side the question, in America, capable of succeeding you. As to the army itself, what have you to expect from them? Have they not frequently abandoned you yourself, in the hour of extremity? Can you have the least confidence in a set of undisciplined men and officers, many of whom have been taken from the lowest of the people, without principle, without courage? Take away them that surround your person, how very few there are you can ask to sit at your table! As to your little navy, of that little, what is left? Of the Delaware fleet, part are taken, and the rest must soon surrender. Of those in the other provinces, some are taken, one or two at sea, and others lying unmanned and unrigged in your harbors.

And, now, where are your resources? Oh! my dear Sir, how sadly have you been abused by a faction void of truth, and void of tenderness to you and your country! They have amused you with hopes of a declaration of war on the part of France. Believe me, from the best authority, it was a fiction from the first. Early in the year 1776, a French gentleman was introduced to me, with whom I became intimately acquainted. His business, to all appearance, was to speculate in the mercantile way. But, I believe it will be found that in his country he moved in a higher sphere. He saw your cause. He became acquainted with all your military preparations. He was introduced to Congress, and engaged with them in a commercial contract. In the course of our intimacy, he has fre-

quently told me, that he hoped the Americans would never think of independency. He gave me his reasons: "Independency can never be supported, unless France should declare war against England. I well know the state of her finances. Years to come will not put them in a situation to enter upon a breach with England. At this moment, there are two parties in the Court of Versailles; one enlisted under the Duke de Choiseul, the other under the Count Maurepas. Choiseul has no chance of succeeding, though he is violent for war; Maurepas must get the better; he is for economy and peace." This was his information, which I mentioned to several members of Congress. They treated it as a fable, depending entirely on Dr. Franklin's intelligence.

The truth of the matter is this:—Dr. Franklin built upon the success of Choiseul. Upon his arrival in France, he found him out of place, his counsels reprobated, and his party dwindled into an insignificant faction. This you may depend upon to be the true state of affairs in France, or the court of Dr. F.; and, further, by vast numbers of letters found on board prizes taken by the king's ships, it appears that all commerce with the merchants, through whom all your supplies have been conveyed, will be at an end, the letters being full of complaints of no remittances from America, and many individuals having generally suffered.

From your friends in England you have nothing to expect. Their numbers have diminished to a cipher;

the spirit of the whole nation is in activity; a few sounding names among the nobility, though perpetually ringing in your ears, are without character, without influence. Disappointed ambition has made them desperate, and they only wish to make the deluded Americans instruments of revenge. All orders and ranks of men in Great Britain are now unanimous, and determined to risk their all with content. Trade and manufactures are found to flourish, and new channels are continually offering, that will perhaps more than supply the loss of the old.

In America your harbors are blocked up, your cities fall one after another; fortress after fortress, battle after battle is lost. A British army, after having passed unmolested through a vast extent of country, have possessed themselves of the Capital of America. How unequal the contest! How fruitless the expense of blood! Under so many discouraging circumstances, can virtue, can honor, can the love of your country, prompt you to proceed? Humanity itself, and sure humanity is no stranger to your breast, calls upon you to desist. Your army must perish for want of common necessaries, or thousands of innocent families must perish to support them; wherever they encamp, the country must be impoverished; wherever they march, the troops of Britain will pursue, and must complete the destruction which America herself has begun. Perhaps it may be said, it is better to die than to be made slaves. This, indeed, is a splendid maxim in theory, and perhaps, in some in-

stances, may be found experimentally true; but when there is the least probability of an happy accommodation, surely wisdom and humanity call for some sacrifices to be made, to prevent inevitable destruction. You well know there is but one invincible bar to such an accommodation; could this be removed, other obstacles might readily be removed. It is to you, and you alone, your bleeding country looks, and calls aloud for this sacrifice. Your arm alone has strength sufficient to remove this bar. May heaven inspire you with this glorious resolution of exerting your strength, at this crisis, and immortalizing yourself as friend and guardian to your country! Your penetrating eye needs not more explicit language to discern my meaning. With that prudence and delicacy, therefore, of which I know you possessed, represent to Congress the indispensable necessity of rescinding the hasty and ill-advised declaration of independency. Recommend, and you have an undoubted right to recommend, an immediate cessation of hostilities. Let the controversy be taken up where that declaration left it, and where Lord Howe certainly expected to find it left. Let men of clear and impartial characters, in or out of Congress, liberal in their sentiments, heretofore independent in their fortunes,—and some such may be found in America,—be appointed to confer with his Majesty's Commissioners. Let them, if they please, propose some well-digested constitutional plan, to lay before them at the commencement of the negotiation. When they have gone thus far, I am confident the

usual happy consequences will ensue; unanimity will immediately take place through the different provinces; thousands who are now ardently wishing and praying for such a measure, will step forth, and declare themselves the zealous advocates for constitutional liberty; and millions will bless the hero that left the field of war, to decide this most important contest with the weapons of wisdom and humanity.

Oh! Sir, let no false ideas of worldly honor deter you from engaging in so glorious a task. Whatever censure may be thrown out by mean, illiberal minds, your character will rise in the estimation of the virtuous and noble. It will appear with lustre in the annals of history, and form a glorious contrast to that of those who have fought to obtain conquest, and gratify their own ambition by the destruction of their species and the ruin of their country. Be assured, Sir, that I write not this under the eye of any British officer, or person connected with the British army, or ministry. The sentiments I express are the real sentiments of my own heart, such as I have long held, and which I should have made known to you by letter before, had I not fully expected an opportunity of a private conference. When you passed through Philadelphia on your way to Wilmington, I was confined, by a severe fit of the gravel, to my chamber; I have since continued much indisposed, and times have been so very distressing, that I had neither spirit to write a letter, nor an opportunity to convey it when written; nor do I yet know by what means I shall get these sheets to your hands.

I would fain hope that I have said nothing by which your delicacy can be in the least hurt. If I have, I assure you it has been without the least intention, and, therefore, your candor will lead you to forgive me. I have spoke freely of Congress and of the army; but what I have said is partly from my own knowledge, and partly from the information of some respectable members of the former, and some of the best officers of the latter. I would not offend the meanest person upon earth; what I say to you I say in confidence, to answer what I cannot but deem a most *valuable purpose.* I love my country; I love you; but to the love of truth, the love of peace, and the love of God, I hope I should be enabled, if called upon to the trial, to sacrifice every other inferior love.

If the arguments made use of in this letter should have so much influence as to engage you in the glorious work which I have warmly recommended, I shall ever deem my success the highest temporal favor that Providence could grant me. Your interposition and advice, I am confident, would meet with a favorable reception from the authority under which you act.

If it should not, you have an infallible recourse still left; negotiate for your country at the head of your army. After all, it may appear presumption, as an individual, to address himself to you on a subject of such magnitude, or to say what measures would best secure the interest and welfare of a whole Continent. The friendly and favorable opinion you have always expressed for me, emboldens me to undertake

it, and which has greatly added to the weight of this motive. I have been strongly impressed with a sense of duty upon the occasion, which left my conscience uneasy, and my heart afflicted, till I fully discharged it. I am no enthusiast; the course is new and singular to me; but I could not enjoy one moment's peace till this letter was written. With the most ardent prayers for your spiritual as well as temporal welfare, I am your most

Obedient and humble friend and servant,

JACOB DUCHÉ.

"This letter elicited no reply from Washington, and no other notice of it than to enclose it in his despatches to Congress. Copies of it were speedily taken and circulated, and it was soon printed in the newspapers. The respectable character of Mr. Duché, and the remarkable tenor of the letter, gave it notoriety at the time, and caused the particulars to be recorded among the events of history.

"Mr. Duché had married a sister of Mr. Francis Hopkinson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who, when the

letter was written, was at Bordentown, as a member of the Continental Navy Board. A copy was forwarded to Mr. Hopkinson, and he wrote a letter to Mr. Duché on the subject, which he enclosed to General Washington, that it might be transmitted to him in Philadelphia, through the regular conveyance of a flag."*

This letter was received by General Washington, and elicited the following in reply:

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

Head Quarters, 21 November, 1777.

SIR,

I am favoured with yours of the 14th inst., inclosing a letter for the Rev. Mr. Duché. I will endeavor to forward it to him, but I imagine it will never be permitted to reach his hands. I confess to you, that I was not more surprised than concerned, at receiving so extraordinary a letter from Mr. Duché, of whom I had entertained the most favorable opinion, and I am still willing to suppose, that it was rather dictated by his fears than by his real sentiments; but I very much doubt whether the great numbers of respectable characters, in the state and army, on whom he has bestowed

* Washington's Writings. (Sparks.) Vol. v.

the most unprovoked and unmerited abuse, will ever attribute it to the same cause, or forgive the man, who has artfully endeavored to engage me to sacrifice them to purchase my own safety.

I never intended to make the letter more public, than by laying it before Congress. I thought this a duty, which I owed to myself; for, had any accident happened to the army entrusted to my command, and it had ever afterwards appeared, that such a letter had been written to and received by me, might it not have been said, that I had betrayed my country? And would not such a correspondence, if kept a secret, have given good grounds for the suspicion? I thank you for your favorable sentiments, which you are pleased to express of me, and I hope no act of mine will ever induce you to alter them. I am, etc.,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"Mr. Hopkinson's letter to Duché deserves to be recorded in this place, not more on account of its connexion with the subject, than of the force and feeling with which it is written, and its lofty tone of patriotism and public virtue."

Bordentown, 14 November, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,

A letter signed with your name, dated at Philadelphia, on the 8th of October, and addressed to his Excellency General Washington, is handed about the

country. Many copies are taken, and I doubt not but it will soon get into the press, and become public throughout the Continent. Words cannot express the grief and consternation that wounded my soul at the sight of this fatal performance. What infatuation could influence you to offer to his Excellency an address filled with gross misrepresentation, illiberal abuse, and sentiments unworthy of a man of character? You have endeavoured to screen your own weaknesses by the most artful glosses, and to apologize to the General for the instability of your temper in a manner, that I am sure cannot be satisfactory to your own conscience.

I could go through this extraordinary letter, and point out to you truth distorted in every leading part. But the world will doubtless do this with a severity, that must be daggers to the sensibilities of your heart. Read that letter over again, and if possible divest yourself of the fears and influence, whatever they were, that induced you to pen it. Consider its contents with an impartial eye, and reflect on the ideas it will naturally raise in the minds of the multitude.

You will then find, that by a vain and weak effort you have attempted the integrity of one, whose virtue is impregnable to the assaults of fear or flattery, whose judgment needed not your information, and who, I am sure, would have resigned his charge the moment he found it likely to lead him out of the paths of virtue and honor. You will find that you have drawn upon you the resentment of Congress, the resentment of the army, the resentment of many worthy and noble char-

acters in England, whom you know not, and the resentment of your insulted country. You have ventured to assert many things at large of the affairs of England, France, and America, which are far from being true, and which, from your contracted knowledge in these matters, it is impossible for you to be acquainted with. In the whole of your letter, you have never recommended yourself to those, whose favour you seem desirous of obtaining, by expatiating on the justice or humanity of their conduct; and at the same time have said everything that can render you odious to those, on whom the happiness of your future life must depend.

You presumptuously advise our worthy General, on whom millions depend with implicit confidence, to abandon their dearest hopes, and with or without the consent of his constituents, "*to negotiate for America at the head of his army.*"

Would not the blood of the slain in battle rise against such perfidy? And with whom would you have him negotiate? Are they not those, who, without the sanction of any civil, moral, or religious right, have come three thousand miles to destroy our peace and property, to lay waste *your* native country with fire and sword, and cruelly murder its inhabitants? Look for their justice and honour in their several proclamations, and look for their humanity in the jails of New York and Philadelphia, and in your own Potter's Field. The whole force of the reasoning contained in your letter tends to this point; that virtue and honour

require us to stand by truth, as long as it can be done with safety, but that her cause may be abandoned on the approach of danger; or, in other words, that the justice of the American cause ought to be squared by the success of her arms. On the whole, I find it impossible to reconcile the matter and style of this letter with your general conduct, or with the virtues of your heart, I would fain hope, notwithstanding your assertion to the contrary, that you wrote it with a bayonet held to your breast, by order of the unprincipled usurpers of your native city. But my chief motive for writing to you at this time is to assure you, that I firmly believe that our just defensive war will be crowned with success, and that we shall ere long return to our habitations in Philadelphia. I would, therefore, most earnestly warn you to evade the dismal consequences of your ill-judged address to our beloved General. Do all you can to wipe off, if possible, its unhappy effects. I tremble for you, for my good sister, and her little family. I tremble for your personal safety. Be assured I write this from true brotherly love. Our intimacy has been of a long duration, even from our early youth; long and uninterrupted, without even a rub in the way; and so long have the sweetness of your manners, and the integrity of your heart, fixed my affections.

I am perfectly disposed to attribute this unfortunate step to the timidity of your temper, the weakness of your nerves, and the undue influence of those about you. But will the world hold you so excused? Will the indivi-

duals you have so freely censured and characterized with contempt have this tenderness for you? I fear not. They will only judge of your conduct by its rashness, and proportion their resentment to their sensibility of the wounds you have given.

I pray God to inspire you with some means of extricating yourself from this embarrassing difficulty. For my own part, I have well considered the principles on which I took part with my country, and am determined to abide by them to the last extremity. I beg my love to my good mother, and my affectionate sisters, I often think of them with great pain and anxiety, lest they should suffer from the want of those necessary supplies, that are now cut off. May God preserve them and you in this time of trial. I am, etc.,

FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

"Mr. Duché went to England with his family, and was appointed preacher in the Lambeth Asylum, where the fame of his eloquence drew around him a large concourse of hearers. He was respected by the best classes of society, and appears to have received a competent remuneration for his pastoral services, and to have enjoyed all that consideration to which he was entitled by his character and profession. He was ill

at ease, however, in a foreign land, and sighed to return to his native country. The following letter is creditable to his heart, and shows at least that he was constant in his attachments, and ready to confess an error into which he had been betrayed by a weakness of judgment."

JACOB DUCHÉ TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Asylum, Lambeth, 2 April, 1783.

Sir,

Will your Excellency condescend to accept of a few lines from one, who ever was and wishes still to be your sincere friend, who never *intentionally* sought to give you a moment's pain, who entertains for you the highest personal respect, and would be happy to be assured under your own hand, that he does not labor under your displeasure, but that you freely forgive what a weak judgment, but a very affectionate heart, once presumed to advise? Many circumstances, at present unknown to you, conspired to make me deem it my duty to write to you. Ignorance and simplicity saw not the necessity of your divulging the letter. I am convinced, however, that you could not, in your public station, do otherwise. I cannot say a word in vindication of my conduct but this, that I had been for months before distressed with continual apprehensions for you and all my friends without the British lines.

I looked upon all as gone; or that nothing could save you, but rescinding the Declaration of Independency. Upon this ground alone I presumed to speak; not to advise an act of base treachery, my soul would have recoiled from the thought; not to surrender your army, or betray the righteous cause of your country, but, at the head of that army, *supporting and supported by them*, to negotiate with Britain for our constitutional rights.

Can you then join with my country in pardoning this error of judgment? Will you yet honor me with your great interest and influence, by recommending, at least expressing your approbation of the repeal of an act, that keeps me in a state of banishment from my native country, from the arms of a dear aged father, and the embraces of a numerous circle of valuable and long-loved friends? Your liberal, generous mind, I am persuaded, will never exclude me wholly from your regard for a mere political error; especially, as you must have heard, that, since the date of that letter, I have led a life of perfect retirement, and since my arrival in England have devoted myself wholly to the duties of my profession, and confined my acquaintance to a happy circle of literary and religious friends.

I have written to my father and many of my friends largely on this subject, requesting them to make such application to the State of Pennsylvania in my behalf, as may be judged necessary and expedient. Should this application be honored with success, I know of nothing that would more effectually satisfy

my desires in a matter of such importance to myself and my family, as a line or two from your Excellency, expressive of your approbation of my return. Temporal emoluments are not wanting to induce me to remain for life on this side of the Atlantic. I have been most hospitably received and kindly treated by all ranks of people, and I should be ungrateful not to acknowledge in the strongest terms my obligation to those, who have placed me in the easy and comfortable situation I now enjoy. It is not necessity, therefore, but unalterable affection to my native country, that urges me to seek return. With every good wish and prayer for your best felicity, and my most hearty congratulations on the happy event of peace, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

JACOB DUCHÉ.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO JACOB DUCHÉ.

Head Quarters, 10 August, 1783.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 2d of April, and, reflecting on its contents, I cannot but say that I am heartily sorry for the occasion which has produced it. Personal enmity I bear none to any man. So far, therefore, as your return to this country depends on my private voice, it would be given in favor of it with cheerfulness. But, removed as I am from the people and policy of the State, in which you formerly resided, and to whose determination your case must be

submitted, it is my duty, whatever may be my inclination, to leave its decision to its constitutional judges. Should this be agreeable to your wishes, it cannot fail to meet my entire approbation. I am, &c.

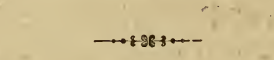
GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"The laws of Pennsylvania excluding the refugees from that State, were not repealed till after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. Mr. Duché returned to Philadelphia in the year 1790, much broken in health, having suffered a paralytic affection. He died in 1794, being then about sixty years of age."*

* Washington's Writings. (Sparks.) Vol. v.

CHRIST CHURCH,

PHILADELPHIA.



This fine building ranks among the most ancient church edifices in the country, and is connected with many interesting reminiscences of the past. It was founded in 1695, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Clayton. The first building erected was humble indeed; it was but one story high, and so low that the ceiling could be touched by the uplifted hand. The bell, which was used to summon the people to worship, swung in the crotch of a large tree in front of the church.

In 1710, a larger, and far more commodious building was erected, enclosing the old one, in which the congregation continued to

CHRIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

worship until the new building was sufficiently completed to admit of its removal.

In 1727, the west end of the church, as it now stands, was erected. In 1731, the eastern side was finished. The building was erected under the supervision of Dr. John Kearsley, of Philadelphia, who is said to have introduced this style of architecture, which is similar to that adopted in the old State House. It is a solid structure, and being built of dark bricks throughout, presents a heavy and sombre appearance.

The steeple, which is one of the loftiest in the city, was erected in 1753–4; it is reputed to be 196 feet in height, and is of an elegant form. The means for its construction was raised by a lottery. The chime of bells in this church are very fine, their musical tones break as gently on the sacred stillness of the Sabbath as in days of yore, when the people gathered from the neighboring towns and villages to listen to their harmony.

These bells were sunk in the Delaware before the British entered Philadelphia, but were hung up again immediately after the evacuation of the city.

Among the revolutionary incidents connected with this church, was the destruction of a bust of King George, carved in relief in front of the church. When the contest began, the spirited patriots could no longer brook this effigy of their oppressor amongst them. They mounted to the spot by means of a ladder, and with a hatchet chopped off its head, and otherwise mutilated it.

With the exception of a few alterations in the interior, the church remains unchanged since the days when Washington and Franklin—when Congress and the officers of the Continental army worshipped within its walls.

The engraving is from a very old picture, with the church surrounded by the humble buildings of the Revolutionary period.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, Philadelphia, ranks among the time-honored Church edifices of the country. Although a fine building, it can boast of but little architectural display. Its exterior is plain, and almost entirely devoid of ornament; in its style there is some resemblance to Christ Church, though less ornate, and far more aerial and agreeable in its effect. At the west end, is a high, square brick tower, from which rises a graceful and tapering spire. On its summit is a large ball and golden cross; from its lofty elevation, this glittering symbol of the Christian faith is a conspicuous object, flashing in the sunlight with a lustre as pure as the redeeming faith it represents.

In beauty of situation this church is unrivalled, the grounds are extensive, of great beauty, and well kept; although situated in the midst of business, and in a densely populated district, there is not within the limits of the city a lovelier or more attractive spot.

In the cemetery attached to the church are many fine tombs and monuments covering the remains of the honored dead.

The Rev. Jacob Duché was once rector of this church. At the eastern end of the church, marked by an unpretending stone, are buried his wife and several of his family.

The engraving represents the church only, without the adjacent scenery, or the spire, which is a recent addition. It is surrounded by trees, whose rich foliage, in summer, almost excludes it from view. The church has a fine chime of bells, which are rung on the Sabbath and other appropriate occasions.

United States Senate, A. D. 1850.

In bringing before the public this elegant engraving, the publishers feel confident of having produced a work of great value to the American people; independent of its intrinsic merit as a work of art, which is of the highest order, it is pre-eminently national in its character, and must claim the particular attention of the American people as the finest national picture ever produced in the country, whilst the exquisite manner in which the subject is rendered, must command the admiration of every lover of art. The point of time selected by the artist may justly be regarded as the period when the representative greatness of the country had

reached its acme. It represents the celebrated Henry Clay of Kentucky, delivering his great speech on the state of the Union, in 1850, the last words he ever uttered in that Senate chamber where he had toiled so long and so faithfully in the public service. Around him are beautifully grouped his distinguished cotemporaries, listening with rapt attention to the thrilling eloquence of the renowned American orator; prominent among them are the celebrated Daniel Webster, Millard Fillmore, J. C. Calhoun, Thomas H. Benton, Gen. Cass, Seward, Hale, Houston, King, Bell, of Tennessee, and including the entire number of senators of that session. The picture possesses great additional interest from the fact, that it was the last senate in which the most distinguished of these great men ever appeared together; the congratulations that hailed the settlement of the agitating questions before the country had scarcely ceased, when the voice of

mourning arose in the land, from the North to the South, theEast and the West, it went forth in one commingling cry, for the most distinguished of her sons had fallen. With the session of 1850 closed the earthly labors of Clay, Webster, and Calhoun; they passed from the council chamber to the grave, and the halls that had so often echoed to their words of eloquence and power, were destined to know them no more. The portraits in the engraving are universally acknowledged to be the most accurate ever published of these distinguished individuals; they are taken principally from the best daguerreotypes, and from the most reliable portraits that could be procured. The picture is 34 inches by 27 in size, painted by P. Rothermel, of Philadelphia, in his best style, and engraved by Robert Whitechurch, of London.

The engraving can be securely rolled, and sent to any part of the country. Persons wishing to ascertain the terms of subscrip-

tion for artist's proofs, colored copies, India or plain proofs, can do so by directing to J. M. Butler, 84 Chestnut Street, Jayne's Granite Building, Philadelphia.

A MERRY-MAKING IN THE OLDEN TIME.

"When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecs sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holy-day.
Milton's L'Allegro.

In this beautiful engraving we have one of those delightful pictures of rural festivity, that, in simplicity and true enjoyment, closely accords with those of our own time. It is one of those scenes which the painter takes an especial interest in portraying. In this composition, we have all the excellencies, the life, vigor, and humor of the old masters,

without the common-place vulgarities that generally distinguished their delineations of rural scenes and festivities.

In the "huge old oak," that occupies the centre of the picture, we recognize one of those monarchs of the wood, that might well be the pride of the village, or become the boast of a nation. Beneath its wide-spreading branches the old and young have gathered in happy groups, intent upon those innocent pastimes that bring no sorrow or bitter reflections in their train. On the right of the picture, embowered among trees, are clustered the lovely cottages, with luxuriant vines and flowers crowning the humble porch with loveliness, and sheltering the little windows with their graceful foliage. In the foreground of the picture is a very fine group. Surrounded by happy children are an aged couple on whom age has descended—

"As a generous winter,
Frosty but kindly."

The old lady, who sits quietly sipping her tea before the cottage door, is evidently enjoying the confusion of her aged partner, who, surrounded by a group of happy girls and children, is being led forth to join in the more active pleasures of the scene; in the middle distance the dance is merrily footed by a group of villagers; on the left of the picture is a knot of sturdy men engaged in athletic sports, and enjoying themselves in true rustic fashion.

In the foreground are several fine groups; in one stands the village booby twirling his hat, thoroughly disconcerted by the angry glances of the lovers whose tete-a-tete he has evidently disturbed; in another group, the garrulous fortune-teller has grasped the hand of a beautiful girl, who, with half averted face and mingled look of fear and pleasure, seems to be listening to the usual story of good fortune through life. The only reverse side to this pleasing composition is on the

left of the picture, where a besotted boor, overcome by excess, has sunk helplessly in a chair, his wife stands beside him, holding by the hand her ragged boy; in this touching little episode, in which there is much significance, we have the only digression from the spirit of happiness prevailing throughout the work. The artist has exhibited such skill in the composition of the various groups, as to constitute a very effective picture; and it is such scenes as this, speaking of the pleasant sunshine and the heart's happiness, that are always welcome, even when contemplated with the critic's eye.

To those who have passed much time amid village scenes, this picture must prove an ever pleasing memento, and a delightful reminiscence to those who have but occasionally been a participant in the happy scene it represents.

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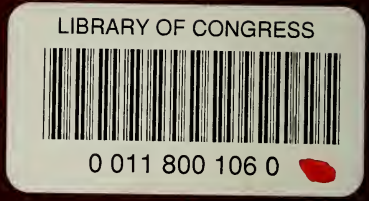
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